

THE AMERICAN
NATIONAL PREACHER.

No. 2. VOL. XII.]

FEBRUARY, 1838.

[WHOLE No. 134.]

SERMON CCXLII.

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THE FAITHFUL PREACHER, AND WAGES OF
UNFAITHFULNESS.

1 COR. IX. 16.—*Wo is unto me if I preach not the Gospel.*

FATHERS AND BRETHREN: From this disciple of Gamaliel, this Apostle of Jesus, of miraculous call and special appointment, this humble, self-denied, laborious, persevering preacher of the Gospel, let us learn that it is not the prerogative of birth, or talents, or education, or past or present success, to entitle us to a life of indolence or ease, relief from toil, or deliverance from wakeful anxious care. To whomsoever a dispensation, or stewardship of the Gospel is committed, on him there is laid an indispensable necessity to preach it; and when he has with all readiness of mind yielded obedience to the very uttermost, he has nothing, in the presence of man or God, wherein to glory. Instead of this, if he preaches from sinister motives, if he preaches negligently, or if unjustifiably he ceases to preach the Gospel, he has nothing to expect but wo. So saith this envoy of Heaven to a perishing world. "Wo is unto me if I preach not." Wo is unto every minister of Jesus who does not, to the extent of his ability and opportunity, preach the word of reconciliation. Wo is unto every one who measures the amount of necessity laid upon him by blind precaution, or blinder prejudice, and not by the wants of the perishing, the worth of the soul, the will of the Father, the grace of the Sanctifier, and the love of the Saviour. Wo is unto us, my brethren, if we preach not up to the full measure of all our muscular and mental power, excited and invigorated by the energy of the Spirit of him who says, "as your day is so shall your strength be"—"lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Yea, moreover, wo is unto us if we take not as the model of our ministry, the example of those "who subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, and showed mighty signs and wonders," and above all the example of him who "for the joy

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that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God.

Fellow workers, were our hearts fully imbued with the grace of the Gospel, did we every hour apprehend the greatness of its salvation, *did we feel for those who tremble on the outmost precipice of perdition, ready to sink into endless remorse and despair*; oh! did we behold the recording angel writing the account of our stewardship, and hastening to complete it in time to meet us at the bar of God; did we believe that transgressions and omissions may be equally loathsome in God's esteem—we should cease to wonder at the ardor of Paul, and, despite of indolence, and worldly influence, and the fear of man, we also, in the ardor of our souls, should exclaim, "wo is unto us if we preach not the Gospel."

The meaning of the text obviously is, that the preacher of the Gospel who suffers any worldly consideration, any personal claim, any selfish motive, to diminish, interrupt or suspend his labors, has nothing to expect but wo. Though an unfolding of the meaning of the term "Gospel" is not necessary in order that we may exhibit the sentiment of this text, yet as that term gives a strong emphasis to this truth, we may be pardoned if we for a moment dwell on its import.

The Gospel! Good tidings of great joy to all people! Tidings of the Saviour, Christ the Lord! Tidings of the undertaking, the advent, the meritorious sufferings, and the prevalent advocacy of Jesus Christ. Tidings proclaimed in promise, published in prophecy, and recorded in history, of blessings, purchased by his blood, and secured in his covenant, suited to our nature, adapted to our necessities, and designed to effect our complete redemption! Tidings tending to produce within us humility, and devotedness to God, and to put us in possession of faith, consolation, and joy, by exciting our minds to consider the divinity of his nature, the glories of his Godhead, the importance of his offices, the depth of his condescension, the greatness of his love, the innocence of his life, the agonies of his death, the prevalence of his prayers, the riches of his grace, the splendors of his glory, the preciousness of his promises, and the perpetuity of his kingdom, whose mediatorial crown will brighten forever. All this was implied in the angel's annunciation; all this is embraced in that Gospel which was proclaimed by Paul, to whom this grace was given that he should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;—such is the Gospel, the word of reconciliation which is committed unto us, the ministry of reconciliation, who are sent forth commissioned to preach it for the salvation of sinners, and the glory of Christ; and wo is unto us if we preach it not.

Two inquiries here naturally arise in the mind,—

I. When do we so preach as to escape the wo here denounced?

II. Wherein does this wo consist?

To the first question, when do we so preach as to escape the wo? it may be replied,

1. We so preach, when we exhibit to all men the whole of the Gospel in its plain and obvious meaning, neither covering its glories under metaphysical clouds, nor concealing its simpler teachings by scholastic refinements; neither breaking up its obvious connection to establish a favorite system, nor quoting unfairly to sanction a schismatic shibboleth; neither polishing down the honest severity of its expressions, nor presenting them in such a way as shall least disturb the sinner; neither softening the rigor of its precepts and the sternness of its threatenings, nor concealing for effect one of its encouragements, its invitations, or its great and precious promises; but, on the contrary, honestly, openly, freely, fully, always declaring to men the whole counsel of God, as it is recorded in the volume of revelation.

2. We so preach as to escape the wo, when, according to the custom of Christ, we make known the truth in the temple reared for, and dedicated to, God's public worship; or when like him we preach in the humble synagogue, the place of less systematic and less finished but not less solemn or acceptable instruction; or when like him we go from city to city, from hamlet to hamlet, from house to house, from heart to heart, preaching the plain, simple Gospel of God our Saviour, using the mountain's side, the valley's retreat, the thronged temple, the lonely wilderness, the hill, the plain, the fisher's boat, the public path, or the pilgrim's seat, as the place where to address the man or the multitude, according to the letter of instruction accompanying our commission. We so preach, when like Philip we address the individual, or when like Peter we address the household, or when like Paul we warn every man, and teach every man publicly and from house to house, day and night, in season and out of season, entreating and persuading by every motive which is presented by truth, and which should be influential in moving man's moral nature.

3. We so preach, when we attach to our sabbath services all that unspeakable importance with which they are invested by God, and at the same time do not consider them a full discharge of the duties of our week's ministrations; and when we do not trust that the polish, which six days labor may have given them, can satisfy God's requirements, or meet the claims of perishing souls, or purchase a dispensation for the omission of other holy and hourly recurring duties. Reason declares, and revelation sanctions the decision, that while we must give to pulpit preparations all the force of head and heart, affections and conscience, so must we give it also, in all its vigor, to the lecture room, the prayer meeting, the domestic circle, the confidential interview, the anxious inquiry, and the hopes and the fears of the new born soul; so must we give it also to the chamber of sickness and the bed of death; and so must we give it to all the sacred social efforts to evangelize the

world—*never forgetting that while we are saving our labor, souls are sinking for ever from hope.*

4. We so preach, when we do not suffer either the fear or the favor of men, to influence our ministry, to fashion our doctrine, to shape our exhortation, to select our subjects, to form our manner, or regulate the times, or the frequency, or the length of our duties; when, neither faithless to our Sovereign, nor ashamed of our embassy, we with confidence approach the conscience of every hearer; passing by none through negligence; but warning all to flee from the wrath to come. In doing which we must not separate doctrines from duties, nor dissociate the Christian charities, nor exceed the letter of our commission, nor suffer the curses of enemies, or the cautions of friends, to cool our ardor, or to paralyze our exertions, in the great work of proclaiming the Gospel of Christ.

5. We so preach, when not expecting to affect the sinner's heart or to arouse his conscience by ornament or polish, by show of learning or power of talents, and when firmly believing that nothing but the Gospel of God will convert the soul, we preach the Gospel, in matter and in form, according to our instructions, being more anxious to save the perishing from perdition, than to please the fastidious taste, or to indulge the affected sensibility,—giving indeed no occasion of offence by coarseness, personalities, invectives, or reproach; but at the same time preaching the Gospel, in its own order, and as much as may be in its own words, in all its sweetness and its severity, in all its conclusive argument and its sovereign requirement. How offensive soever to the unregenerate, who may count us their enemies for telling them the truth, and how contrary soever to carnal policy this course may be, it was the manner of our Master's teaching; and this should satisfy the heart of every disciple.

6. We so preach, when through all and above all we exemplify the Gospel in our life and labor, being through the cross of Christ crucified unto the world, and having the world crucified unto us. Thus dead to the sinful pleasures of life was Paul, when he exclaimed, "Wo is unto me if I preach not the Gospel."

II. It may be inquired, wherein does that wo consist which awaits the faithless preacher? "Wo is unto me." Wo! It is the language of distress, the voice of misery, the echo of anguish, the groan of despair. No other word so well befits the faithless preacher when self-condemned.

FIRST Wo.—*Little success.*

It is the economy of God's husbandry, that he who soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly. The great Husbandman has declared, "him that honoreth me I will honor, and he that despiseth me shall be lightly esteemed." And we confidently appeal for proof of the constancy of this result to the honest observation of all men. Wherever the pulpit

addresses of the sabbath, sparingly measured out, however labored or learned, constitute the sum of ministerial exertion, there is, there will be, but little success. We could point to many blighted congregations, to many languishing churches, as proofs of this truth, and as manifestations of the weight of this wo. Far be it from us to limit the power of the Holy One, by any preacher's faithlessness; but the history of the church every where exhibits a wonderful proportion between the means employed, and the blessing granted; as though God measured back full measures of disappointment into the heartless bosom of the indolent preacher, who estimates his duty by his fears of spending his strength—placing his own ease in preference to the cause of Christ and the salvation of souls. In woful sadness shall such gather the wilted stalk, the blighted ear, and the grainless sheaf, as their only harvest. Go to the infrequent, interrupted, deserted lecture; go to the tardy, discountenanced prayer-meeting; note the family visit, the personal conversation, the private exhortation, neglected; look at the church not blessed with parochial labor—and you will cease to wonder, why it is that ministers have occasion so often to say, "Lord who hath believed our report!" The faithful preacher will have reason continually to use these words in the sadness of compassion for the many who perish, but the faithless preacher will use them with remorseful pangs.

SECOND WO.—*Great discouragement.*

What can discourage us more than to see our labor lost, the Lord's work languishing, the spirit of God's people depressed, and our handful of seed, so well chosen, so skilfully prepared, and so carefully sown, which we so fondly hoped would grow up like the cedars of Lebanon, either dying in the furrow, or sparingly springing up, a few blighted, hopeless, headless stalks! Look we for the cause? Surely we should not expect to find it in ourselves. What can be done, which we have not done? Are not our frames delicate, are not our friends alarmed, are not our families anxious? Do we not sufficiently imprison our bodies, do we not study closely to understand every shade of speculation? Can any grace the pulpit with higher preparation? Can any desire more earnestly to conciliate the people, to secure their approval, to gain their applause? And yet six days labor lost in an hour! Ah, yes, and the song of praise has lost its ardor, the office of prayer has lost its animation, the very gospel has lost its effect, for now there is none who inquires, "what must I do to be saved?"

Who can bear the weight of this wo? Could we foresee its crushing burden, popularity would appear to be like the bubble on the mountain brook, and the joy of winning souls to God, to be of greater value than the world. This would rouse us from the spell of carnal influence, which binds us to a faithless, profitless service; and instead

of syllogizing with Socrates, or moralizing with Seneca, or philosophizing with Plato, or playing the orator with Cicero, we should be found taking our lives in our hands, keeping the retributions of eternity full in view, following gospel examples as our guides; and resolving to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified, we should be found taking as our motto, "wo is unto me if I preach not the Gospel;" and under cover of our high commission, forcing through the barriers of preconceived notions, of personal pride, and of pampered prejudice, however sanctioned by age, or strengthened by habit, we should boldly, though affectionately, carry the cause and cross of Christ into every house, and home to every heart.

Here, and here alone, can we hope for relief. Nothing else will ever lift the incumbent curse from the preacher's heart, oppressed by discouragements. In no other way can the bosom be filled with the joy and gladness of a plentiful harvest.

THIRD Wo.—*Poverty of spirit.*

As our usefulness is diminished, our discouraged hearts are chilled, every fibre is relaxed, every power paralyzed, every preparation made with double weariness, and to every duty the soul is disinclined. The ever returning stone of the fable was not more oppressively discouraging, than will be the constantly recurring duties of each week. The labors of Hercules were not more fatiguing, than it will be to us, to visit the sick, to appear in the lecture room or the place of social prayer, to meet the tempted or the bereaved, the backsliding or the benighted, the cold or the unconverted. Each labor in its turn comes with condign wo upon the heart deprived of the riches of its resources, and drained of the stream of its consolations. Here the soul ceases to bring forth out of its stores any thing new or old. Here it is forced in agony often to acknowledge its leanness. Disappointment and destitution produce famine fatal alike to the faithless preacher and his unhappy people. Nor does it alter the case, that they "desire to have it so," and applaud, for the course he is pursuing, the instrument of their own undoing. Could we for an hour realize the coming pressure of this wo, it would arouse us to efforts to escape the curse—it would make us start from our present slumbers, with the cry—"wo is unto me if I preach not the Gospel."

FOURTH Wo.—*Worldly mindedness.*

The heart cannot be either idle or empty. In proportion as it becomes indolent in holy offices, or poor in spiritual treasures, it will be busily employed in occupations of vanity, and abundantly filled with the pleasures of sin. Every place in the heart, not filled with the love and the labor of the Lord's vineyard, will be occupied according to our situation and circumstances: in the country with the farm, the cattle, the crops; in the city with the business, the fashions, the follies, the dissipation, the fiction, the lust of the flesh, the pride of life,

the pride of the eye, and whatever else, in contempt of duty, or in despite of mercy, ministers to the progress and pressure of this dreadful wo.

FIFTH Wo.—*The contempt of men.*

Indolence, faithlessness, and folly, degrade the minister's character. Look at the priesthood of Spain, of Portugal, of France, or of South America. Is there not even in our own country occasion enough to inquire, and examples enough to answer the question, whether or not there is in society a man so meanly esteemed as the labor saving, time serving, money making minister of the Gospel? How would you esteem the physician who would visit his patient in the height of disease, only once in the week, and even then neither feel his pulse, nor ask a question in regard to his symptoms! No matter how learnedly he might discuss the origin, progress, and variety of disease, or the theory and efficacy of treatment,—you would hold him in contempt. What would you think of a lawyer who would attend to the cause of his client only on the court day, and then not examine a witness in the case? Or what would you think of a general, who would never visit camp or garrison except on the day of battle, even though his men had broken out into mutiny? No doubt in the same utter contempt do men, both good and bad, hold the preacher of the Gospel, whose hands and head and heart are not every day sanctified by the discharge of some of his holy duties—whose hours are not often given to examine the cases, and enter into the spiritual affairs of the souls committed to his care. You cannot contemplate his case for a moment without feeling in some degree the insupportable pressure of this wo.

SIXTH Wo.—*The loss of spiritual comfort.* It belongs to God's dispensation of grace generally to pay back, even in this world, good measure, pressed down, heaped up, and running over. God generally rewards with present grace and its precious consolations, and always crowns with future glory, the man who rises above the claims of earth and flesh in the holy toil of saving sinners. But, on the other hand, he takes from the indolent his talent, and from the commissioned miser those comforts of the Gospel and those consolations of the Spirit, which he so parsimoniously ministers to others. God takes back in righteousness the joys of his salvation, and leaves the wretched guide to grope his way, without friend to counsel or support him, and without a star to tell the hour of the night, or give him hopes of the approach of dawn. All that formerly ministered to his pleasure, now heralds his coming misery, or helps to excite fearful forebodings of inevitable wo.

SEVENTH Wo.—*Danger of dying in such a state.* How dreadful the prospect of approaching the judgment of the great day, to render an account of our stewardship, when the page of duties is almost a blank, while the page of derelictions is covered with the record of means possessed, but unemployed, opportunities afforded, but not em-

braced, souls not disturbed, sinners not warned, saints not edified, ministerial talents not exercised, duties not discharged, standing degraded, and profession disgraced! How terrible the prospect of presently meeting the everlasting execrations of those who have sunk and suffered through our fault! How gloomy the thought of meeting our early opportunities, our first impressions of duty, our vows, our prayers, our tears, the gifts received, the laws acknowledged, the promises believed, and all those bright examples which were presented for our approval and imitation, in the lives and in the deaths of the Saviour, the Patriarchs, the Prophets, the Apostles, the martyrs, and the confessors of Jesus. For all these will be as so many swift witnesses to call down upon us the vengeance of this wo.

EIGHTH Wo.—*Eternal death, or eternally diminished happiness.* If there be a wo which enters not into the ruin of the besotted pagans, which settles not on the soul of the ignorantly impenitent, it would seem just that it should be reserved for the eternal manifestation of God's immutable righteousness, in the deeper and more dreadful condemnation of the sordid, selfish, faithless minister of Christ. And, even though he should escape eternal death, through the sovereign grace of God, yet how must his happiness be forever diminished! The soul that might have turned many to righteousness, and shone as the stars for ever, is now, by its foolish faithlessness, shorn of its beams. The soul that might have struck the highest chord and tuned the sweetest lyre among the spirits of the just made perfect, now scarcely reaches the lowest note without forbidden discord. The minister of Gospel grace and mercy, who might have stood sublime amid the full beamings of the Sun of Righteousness, now scarcely gains admission to the twilight in the horizon of blessedness. The ambassadors who might have led back to the throne of God and of the Lamb, the submissive spirits of rebel provinces, and then taken their seats of honor next to the thrones of the Apostles, now are scarcely called home to heaven, even in the depths of God's condescension and long suffering. "Wo! wo! is into me if I preach not the Gospel."

Brethren, let us in the silence of our wakeful midnights, in the solemnities of our secret devotions, in the searchings of our own hearts, in our private studies, in our personal appeals to the consciences of our hearers, in our domestic visits, our sick-bed sympathies, and our sanctuary services—let us endeavor to ascertain, whether or not we are inheritors of this wo. Let us ever so preach, that we may "finish our course with joy, and the ministry which we have received of the Lord Jesus." Then, instead of wo, we shall hear, "well done, good and faithful servants, enter into the joy of your Lord." Then, instead of a curse, we shall receive a crown. Then, we shall not, as now, need to cheer each other on the field of labor; but, without weariness and with fulness of

joy, we shall be employed as kings and priests unto God forever and ever.

Finally, let all remember, that the duties and dangers of pastor and people are reciprocal. If it be his duty to preach, it is your duty, beloved hearers, so to hear as to escape the curse. If you hear not as you should, you must expect—to remain in impenitence, and harden others—to remain in unbelief, and hinder others—to continue in rebellion, and seduce others—to live unsanctified, and pollute others—to remain under condemnation, and involve others—to die accursed, and destroy others.

May God avert such awful wo, and may he bless you all with spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Amen.

SERMON CCXLIII.

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GRACE IRRECONCILABLE WITH SIN.

ROM. VI. 1, 2.—*What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*

It is the glory of the Divine plan for saving sinners, that it tends to make them holy. It brings redemption from sin, and presents the strongest possible motives to purity of life. It has ever been the favorite objection of the unbeliever, that it encourages sin. His language is this:—If we are saved by grace—if we are justified by faith, without the deeds of the law, why are we not freed from all moral obligation? Is obedience necessary? Is not all restraint from sin removed? Does not God take occasion from our wickedness, to make a more luminous display of his own perfections, and especially, to show in brighter light the riches of his goodness? Why shall we not then continue in sin that grace may abound? The Apostle takes up this objection in the text, and pursues it in the two succeeding chapters. He deems it an unwarrantable attack upon the Gospel scheme of grace. He demonstrates the fact, that purity of heart and life is the legitimate

tendency of this plan of salvation, in the case of every pardoned sinner. The Divine Redeemer, instead of opening the door to transgression, has made the amplest provisions for holiness. The law is in no way made void, but established. While God's throne of mercy smiles on penitence, it frowns on iniquity with uncompromising severity. Where grace reigns, sin is subdued. Now, shall the charge of the proud unbeliever lie against this scheme of infinite grace, whereby men are raised from bondage and death? Does the believer in Christ understand, that the freedom into which he is introduced, is a liberty to sin? In the strong language of the text—"Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" From these words we derive the following doctrine; some proof of which will now be adduced:—

It is the tendency of the Divine system of grace for the salvation of men, to destroy sin and promote holiness. This is evident,

1. *From the testimony of Scripture.* The Bible, in almost every page, exhibits the humble spirit and holy character of the servants of Christ. It also contains numerous declarations of the fruits of grace. "For the grace of God teacheth us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world. God hath chosen you to salvation, *through sanctification of the Spirit.* Every one that hath this hope in him, *purifieth himself*, as Christ is pure. The gospel bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you since the day ye heard it and knew the grace of God in truth. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law but under grace." This is the language of the Holy Ghost, testifying that personal holiness is the fruit of salvation by grace. Sin is condemned. The grace bestowed on the sinner is invariably connected with inward sanctification and external purity. God has joined them together; let not man put them asunder. This doctrine is manifest,

2. *From the manner in which the Gospel provisions were made.* In this respect God's plan of mercy is full of wisdom. When he planned for salvation, he also laid a scheme for the destruction of sin. His moral government received no shock. The relation of man to his Maker was left, with its motives to obedience unimpaired. Jehovah provided to pardon and save the sinner in such a way, as to secure as deep an impression in regard to the evil nature and effects of sin, as if every transgressor had received the penalty of the law. The moral influence produced by punishments, is wholly secured. Salvation comes through a channel, in which the justice of the Sovereign is most impressively displayed. He expresses his displeasure towards sin in the cross. Its enormous evil is commensurate with the divine dignity of the Son. Man is made to see an innocent Being submitting

to untold agonies in his stead, as the suitable expression of his crime. All that *he* ought to endure, is illustrated amid the pains of the voluntary Sufferer. Here he sees at what expense a violated law must be sustained, while he is delivered from perdition. The "sinfulness or sin" is written in the blood, and expressed in the groans of an incarnate God.

Thus does God tell the world what sin is, and what is its desert, when he opens the way to heaven. Grace flows from the scenes of Gethsemane and Calvary. It comes attended with the strongest demonstration the throne of God could furnish, that he will never connive at sin. It does not spring from the ruins of a broken law, and the crumbling elements of Jehovah's empire, invaded and sundered by the destroyer. It does not come, because the Almighty has determined to let the deep and turbid tide of sin roll unrestrained over his vast dominions. No : salvation is no such thing. It is surrounded with the strongest barriers against transgression. It sheds the brightest light that ever beamed, on the dark deeps of sin. It declares in the strongest language God ever used, his eternal purpose to pursue and punish it, with his fiercest displeasure. The cross opens the way to heaven, but effectually shuts the door against sin.

3. *It was the express design of the Gospel plan of salvation, to free us from sin.* It is written, "Christ gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness." It is plainly declared in the following passage, that sanctification was the important end of salvation :—"Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it ; that he might sanctify and cleanse it—that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." It was the design of Christ to save *from* sin, and not *in* sin. In no other way had holiness been known in this world of pollution. The renovation of man's moral nature could not have taken place. Abana and Pharpar would have been of no avail. Christ, by his death, opened the way of access to the waters of Jordan. He came expressly to prepare the highway of holiness, and conduct man back to the purity of the skies.

We hold forth a salvation, whose grand design is deliverance from sin. All who flee to it embrace it as such. Before this, and besides this, there is no sufficient provision, human or divine, for such a purpose. Look at its high object. See the evidence it bears of the intent of its Author, to redeem us from the power of sin. Who will impiously say, that grace and sin must go together ? Who will charge God with letting down the obligations to obedience, when he saves us by Jesus Christ, who died for this very end, "that he might put away sin."

4. *The method in which salvation is applied, secures holiness to the subject of it.* The blessings of salvation are applied by the Holy Spirit. The mode of application is a part of the scheme. "According to his mercy he saves us, by the *washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.*" The incipient work of that Spirit, is "to convince of sin." Its complete work, is to "turn us from all iniquity." Not only does the sinner receive full pardon and deliverance from hell; but he is born of God, so that he cannot willingly commit sin. He has a new heart put within him, so that he hates sin as the enemy of God, the curse of the earth, and the procurer of eternal death.

If his will remained unchanged, he would still be the servant of unrighteousness. But his will is renovated. He chooses holiness. His inclination is toward God. If he does evil, it is "the evil he would not." As Christ, in preparing salvation, did not destroy the law, but magnified it in the sight of heaven and earth; so the man who is saved by Christ delights in the law, and has his spirit moulded in conformity to it. God puts his law in his mind, and writes it in his heart. God enthrones himself in his heart. He has a principle of holiness that binds him to the eternal throne. He has a disposition, which, when delivered from remaining corruption, fits him for the habitation of perfect righteousness. His purpose and his heart are against sin. How could a scheme be better adapted to secure the renovation of man? How could the soul be inspired with a deeper devotion to the service of Heaven? What could present stronger attractions to the centre of light and purity? What else could thus make us "die unto sin and live unto righteousness?"

5. *Salvation by grace powerfully urges to holy obedience, on the principle of gratitude.* This is the doctrine of Christ. "To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." Great favors received awaken a deep sense of obligation to the benefactor. Look at the first emotions of the convert. His heart is alive with gratitude to God. The blessing of heaven, which he has received, appeals to his inmost soul with astonishing power. He breathes forth with an earnest spirit, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Here he is touched with motives that never lose their force. They are revived with new energy, whenever he reads the story of a Saviour's sufferings, and "looks unto the rock whence he was hewn, and the hole of the pit whence he was digged." His gratitude is awakened by a favor which infinite love only could bestow. His salvation is not owing to himself. He had nothing to merit it. The curse of a broken law rested on him. He lay slumbering, when destruction was hastening to seize him. Here grace reached him, opened his eyes, and delivered him from the yawning pit. No human arm could bring help. No angelic

might could roll away the curse and burst his chains. Entreaties of friendship and love, motives of three worlds, rolling time and a hastening eternity, could not move him. But he heard the voice of Almighty grace. This broke his stubborn heart, and brought him to the feet of Jesus. Such was his deliverance. Hence obligations arise and press upon him with the weight of infinite love. He feels that all his powers are not too much to give in return. Go, ask the humble, pardoned soul, if it is not so. Go, ask some praying, faithful disciple, if gratitude to his Redeemer does not inspire him in the service. Ask the multitude of saints on earth, if they cannot adopt the language of the Apostle, "The love of Christ constraineth us, that we should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us, and rose again." Ask the ransomed company who now sing in glory, if this principle of devotion does not reign in heaven. Listen to their anthem—"Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever."

That the Gospel scheme of salvation leads to holiness, is evident,

6. *From the lives of Christians.* Here we must at last come to see what effect religion has upon the character. We appeal to the lives of the true followers of Jesus. They are epistles for Christ, known and read of all men. Here it is manifest that the principles of the Gospel embraced in the heart, are fitted to produce a holy life. Those that love God are the best men that live on the earth. Humility and meekness, those lovely traits of character, always accompany true piety. As they were characteristics of Christ, they are also of his disciples. Such are willing to esteem others better than themselves. It is their principle of action to forgive their enemies. Is not the real Christian the man who conquers the spirit of revenge under injury, and of malice towards them who cast reproach upon his name? Does he not feel it his province to endure patiently for "righteousness' sake?" This was the spirit of the primitive disciples. This was the temper of Paul. This same temper has been manifested by a host of christian worthies, who have had their names cast out as evil, and meekly resigned their bodies to the gibbet or the stake. Grace gives to the character the stamp of true excellence.

Christians are also eminently men of prayer. A follower of Christ was never known to live a prayerless life. Communion with Heaven is the strength and consolation of his heart. His spirit is attuned to fellowship with God. This is his holy employment, until he mounts to the scene of universal praise.

Christians are the most benevolent men. They love to do good. They are co-workers with God in the salvation of men. Every great effort to meliorate the condition of man, is the fruit of Christian zeal

and love. Are the friends of Christ the *last* to feel for the woes of humanity, and the crying wants of a world? Are their hearts the *last* to break? Who first stretches out the "melting hand of charity?" Where is the spring-head of the streams of mercy, that are now flowing in full tide over this land and the world? Whose voice is raised in loudest notes, in behalf of a perishing world? Who compose the sinew of every heaven-devised enterprise for man's welfare, in time and eternity? Whose heart leaps for joy at every new precursor of the resurrection of a world from spiritual death? Who says, my property is the Lord's, and I devote it to his service? Who says, my life is his, and all its energies shall be consecrated to him, until the last pulse shall beat? Who is ready to sacrifice domestic happiness, kindred and country, and waste beneath a torrid sun, to save undying souls? Religion has this honor in her devoted friends. The graves of Swartz, and Martyn, and Newell, will answer these questions. There is a loud response in the prayers, benevolence and self-denials of holy men at home; as well as in the consecration of every thing to the welfare of benighted heathen.

I can appeal with safety to you. Do not real Christians have "their fruit unto holiness?" Are not these the men, who have been ready to give up this present world, with its gains and honors?

Do you seek for men of integrity? Are not piety and dishonesty utterly incompatible? What, in one word, of purity, love and faith, could be found on the earth, if the church of the Redeemer were blotted from existence? Tell me not then that sin is the fruit of salvation by Christ. Cast not such reproach on our holy religion. There is sin enough in the world, and sin enough in the church, but charge it not on the principles of the Gospel. It is only through this scheme, that omnipotent grace comes to eradicate sin from the soul, and transform it, so that it can sing in seraphic ardor and purity before the throne.

This subject furnishes lessons of practical instruction. It teaches,

1. *That ungodly professors give no evidence of piety.* They who possess the grace of God, "are dead unto sin," and cannot "live any longer therein." As "every tree is known by its fruit, and a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit," the inference is plain, that an ungodly life bespeaks a heart destitute of piety. Christ is not the minister of sin. Grace is the enemy of ungodliness. What are your lives? Are you knowingly violating any of the commandments of God? Are you guilty of dishonesty or unfairness in trade, of withholding from others their due, of "grinding the faces of the poor," of encouraging intemperance, sabbath breaking, or slander, or of exciting discord among brethren? These sins write an awful sentence against you. If you indulge in any of them, how can the power of sin have

been dislodged in your heart? You feel not the power of sanctifying grace. Your heart does not burn with gratitude to that Redeemer, who died for sinners. The great design of the scheme of salvation is not manifest in you. I would address the solemn interrogation to your hearts,—Has the Gospel become the power of God to your salvation? What testimony does your life exhibit that you have been “born again?” Have you been brought to the feet of Jesus, in penitential sorrow for sin? What evidence could you find this moment to cheer you in the day of death? You are trying to make “fellowship between light and darkness, between Christ and Belial.” It cannot be. Your profession is *nothing*, if sin is not forsaken. Instead of salvation from sin, you are yet in the “bonds of iniquity.” There can be no grace within you. For if sin is yet predominant in the life, it also holds its supremacy in the heart. It has never yet been crushed. Corruption is yet alive in all its native vigor. Ungodly professors! tremble before the throne of Him who abhorreth iniquity.

2. *This subject presents to Christians the most powerful motives to cultivate holiness.* You are urged to flee from sin. You are redeemed for this very end, that you may be sanctified, and cleansed, and shine before the Lord in the beauties of holiness. God met you by his grace to deliver you from sin. You have the cross ever before you, where your pardon was bought with groans, and pains, and dying strifes. Go to that cross, and learn your obligations. You are also bound to a holy heaven. Slumber not, then, in the midst of corruption. Tamper not with temptation. Cleave not to this earth with such a death grasp. Do not wrap your souls in the mantle of idleness. Live as those redeemed by blood. Live as those allied to the throne of God; and shed on all around, the strong and convincing light of a holy character. You owe every thing to Christ. You resisted till his grace conquered. You were condemned, when Christ delivered you. You were a wanderer in the broad way to death, when he found you and brought you to his fold. How do grace and the cross and heaven teach you to live!

Seek to illustrate the appropriate tendency of the principles of the Gospel. Dishonor not your Master, by furnishing ground for the false imputation, that grace encourages censoriousness or any form of ungodliness. Instead of this, it challenges your every energy to the work of holy living. It summons you to the field of active benevolence. It lays all you have under contribution to the cause of Jesus. It calls you to spend this mortal life for God, until earth is exchanged for heaven.

3. *The case of the sinner is alarming, until he repents.* The Gospel proclaims salvation; but there is no salvation for a soul continuing in sin. “The Lord God is merciful and gracious”—but “*will*

by no means clear the guilty." Grace is free and full; and pardon is offered "without money and without price." But all this may be, and millions may rise from earth to heaven, to praise throughout eternity the God of their salvation, while your souls sink in unutterable woe. With the proposals of mercy which Christ makes, he still declares your inevitable ruin, unless your sins are abandoned. In spite of abounding grace you will perish. Salvation is dispensed from a throne, with which you are at war while you continue impenitent. You will be treated as an enemy forever, unless you make peace. Justice will shine with eternal splendor, in consigning you to endless despair. It is the pleasure of God, that "the wicked forsake his way." "Turn from your evil ways, for why will you die?" Break away from your sins. Repent, and life is certain. Refuse to repent, and there is no alternative but death. If you would gain heaven, you must become holy. Divine authority and love pursue you with this unalterable claim. Remaining in sin, that love can never save you; but "the wrath to come" must be found "without mixture" on your guilty soul.